

stored algorithm for executing reprint at the time of malfunction. Note, the printer malfunction indicates the status of the printer when the printer can not continue printing, and includes depletion of paper,  
5 memory overflow, power off, shortage of expendables such as toner, communication error, program error, and so on. The job management unit 26 recognizes the printer status such as the foregoing conditions of the printer, and print control program of the present invention causes a  
10 variety of distributed printing controls in accordance with the printer status recognized (managed) by the job management unit 26. An image communication unit 211 allows the host computer 1 to communicate with a printer and carries out protocol control of a LAN. A LAN line  
15 212 connects the host computer 1 to a printer (A) 13, a printer (B) 14, a printer (C) 15 and a printer (D) 16. Upon receiving a distributed-print request from the application printing unit 29, the distributed printing unit 210 decides which of the printers A to D are to be  
20 used for printing and delivers print data (a print instruction) to the printer drivers that correspond to the printers decided.

Fig. 3 is a diagram illustrating an example of a screen output to the display unit 28 for configuring a  
25 distribution algorithm. The screen displays an item 31 ("DISTRIBUTE NUMBERS OF PAGES") for setting the numbers of pages to be printed in distributed fashion. If item

31 has been selected, then it becomes possible to select either an item 32 ("DISTRIBUTE EVENLY"), which automatically sets equal numbers of pages to be printed by the distributed printers, or an item 33 ("SPECIFY  
5 NUMBERS OF PAGES"), which enables the user to set at will the number of pages to be printed by each distributed printer. A setting area 34 is used if item 33 ("SPECIFY NUMBERS OF PAGES") has been selected. An item 35 ("DISTRIBUTE NUMBERS OF COPIES") is for setting  
10 numbers of necessary copies to be printed in distributed fashion if a plurality of copies are to be produced by printing. If item 35 ("DISTRIBUTE NUMBERS OF COPIES") is selected, then the number of copies to be printed by each distributed printer can be set at will in a setting  
15 area 36. The distributed printing unit 210 reconstructs the print data (the print instruction) in such a manner that the set numbers of pages or numbers of copies will be printed by the specified printers. The distributed printing unit 210 delivers print data to each of the  
20 printer drivers to thereby generate a plurality of distributed print jobs.

In the example illustrated in Fig. 3, numbers of pages for distributed printing have been set and printers A, B and C have been designated to print pages  
25 1 to 3, pages 4 to 6 and pages 7 to 9, respectively, in distributed fashion.

Fig. 4 is a diagram illustrating an example of a screen output to the display unit 28 for configuring a reprint algorithm at the time of malfunction.

First, when reprint is performed at the time of  
5 malfunction, the user specifies which pages are to be printed. In the example of Fig. 4, only the page for which printing failed owing to malfunction has been designated for reprinting (item 41). This designation is metafile spooled and is effective only in a case  
10 where a file in an intermediate-file format is generated. If the designation is not a metafile spool, all pages that were to be printed by the malfunctioning printer are reprinted. In a case where stapling is performed automatically using the stapling function of a  
15 printer, item 41 would not be selected. For example, the item 41 may be displayed with a pale color, and no input for setting the item 41 may be accepted.

Next, the printer to be used for reprinting is designated. To accomplish this, the screen displays an  
20 item 42, which is for specifying reprint by the printer that printed the pages preceding those of the faulty printer or succeeding those of the faulty printer. If this item is selected, priority is given to an attempt at reprint by the printer that printed the pages that  
25 preceded or followed the printing failure. This reprint method is effective only when it is possible to discriminate whether the printer that printed the pages